



The De-Stress Press

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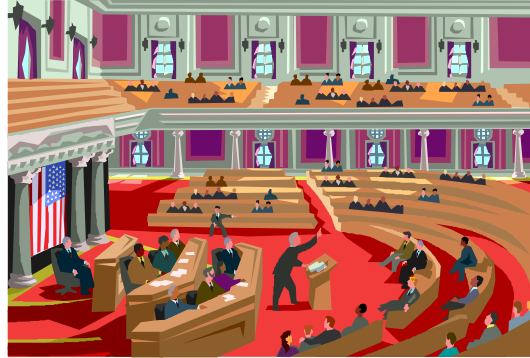
The Western New York Stress Reduction Program Newsletter

3359 Broadway, Cheektowaga, NY 14227

When the heart grieves over what it has lost, the spirit rejoices over what it has left. ~ Sufi epigram ~

THE PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ACT OF 2006 *

The Western New York Stress Reduction Program is pleased to learn that legislation has been proposed that will help prepare first responders and mental health professionals respond in the wake of public health emergencies such as those resulting from terrorist attacks and natural disasters.



The Public Mental Health Emergency Preparedness Act of 2006 would establish a National Center for Public Mental Health Emergency Preparedness which would coordinate the development and delivery of public health and mental health services in collaboration with existing federal, state and local service providers. The Center would be charged with four functions:

- 1) The establishment and dissemination of training curricula for emergency services providers, public health, mental health and health care professionals, school personnel, county emergency managers, spiritual care providers, and State and local governmental officials responsible for emergency preparedness.
- 2) The establishment of a clearinghouse for educational materials, guideline development, and research on public mental health emergency preparedness and service delivery.
- 3) The creation of an annual national forum for emergency health professionals, researchers, other experts and government officials to identify and address gaps in science, practice, policy, and education as related to preparedness.
- 4) The requirement of annual evaluations of our public mental health emergency preparedness and recommendations for improvement in our response strategies and resources.

For more information about this legislation, please contact the NYS Fire Chiefs via their website:
<http://www.nysfirechiefs.com/>

*The content of this feature has been paraphrased from a letter written by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton to Commissioner Richard Benkitt of Thorwood, NY Fire Department

Fast Facts

- ❖ 9-35% of the population experience significant post incident distress following exposure to a critical incident.
- ❖ Since 2004, the WNYSRP has provided 86 interventions to nearly 800 emergency responders representing over 100 organizations in Erie, Niagara and Wyoming counties.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Western New York Stress Reduction Program got its start nearly twenty years ago as the result of an incident which involved a worker who was crushed beneath the wheels of a garbage truck. The responders knew the victim and, in fact, grew up in the same community. In spite of every effort to save him, the young man died during surgery. Like so many calls we respond to, the personal aspect made it difficult for the responders to accept the outcome. At the time, The Wyoming Erie Emergency Medical Services Council was made aware of Grady Bray, PhD and the work he was doing with CISM. We made contact and he was able to come here and conduct a debriefing. Shortly thereafter, another incident occurred that involved a rural rescue squad's response to an EMS call at a farm. When they arrived on location, they found that they were in the middle of a violent domestic dispute and shots were still being fired. This was the first time the responders were ever placed in that kind of situation. Dr. Bray was brought in again to conduct a debriefing. The EMS Council was able to cover the costs of these first debriefings.

Everyone who attended expressed their appreciation for having had the opportunity to take part in this new process. The council and representatives from Wyoming and Erie County Counties met with Grady Bray and began to establish a framework aimed at establishing a program here. And that's how it began in 1988. Today the team is comprised of 50 volunteers from all emergency response disciplines including corrections, emergency department personnel and mental health. We are proud to be serving Wyoming, Erie, Niagara, and Genesee Counties. Stay safe and if you need us, call us - we'll be there.

~ Michael Walters, Executive Director ~

How You Can Help

The Western New York Stress Reduction, Inc. is a proud participant in the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County *Community Care* Campaign and Donor Choice program for 2006. The United Way *Community Care* Campaign provides donors with a unique opportunity to support a diverse network of human services. A gift to United Way *Community Care* ensures that critical needs are met in the community. In addition to your gift to United Way *Community Care*, you may consider adding a gift designated to the Western New York Stress Reduction Program.

How to Contact the Team

Information & Education: 716-681-6070

Immediate Assistance:

Erie County: 716-898-3696

Genesee County: 585-343-3313

Niagara County: 716-433-4482

Wyoming County: 585-786-8867

Website: www.erie.gov/depts/wnystress

Email: wnystress@yahoo.com

Additional Websites

CDC: www.cdc.gov

FEMA: www.fema.gov

ICISF: www.icisf.org

NYS Emergency Management Office: www.semo.state.ny.us

U.S. Fire Administration: www.usfa.fema.gov

Trauma Response Publication: www.aaets.org/trresp.htm

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: www.dhs.gov/dhspublic

Training Opportunities

- ❖ September 14th & 15th, 2006: *Assisting Individuals in Crisis*. For more information, contact Bonita Frazer at 716-856-9835 ext. 26.
- ❖ Recommended self-study course: *IS-700: National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction*. Visit: <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/is700.asp>